



1 HOUSE RESOLUTION 415

2 WHEREAS, Poverty and welfare dependence are widespread
3 throughout the State of Illinois, with almost 1,500,000 of its
4 citizens being dependent on the State's public assistance
5 programs for their most basic needs, and over 200,000 families,
6 including 500,000 children, relying on cash assistance from the
7 State for all or part of their subsistence needs; and

8 WHEREAS, Poverty and unemployment diminish individual
9 self-esteem, can undermine family stability, and affect family
10 formation, community security, and cohesion; and

11 WHEREAS, Under the new federal welfare law, the Personal
12 Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of
13 1996, cash assistance benefits will be limited to 60 months,
14 and over 100,000 adult heads of households in the Illinois
15 welfare caseload must have been employed by the year 2002 or
16 they and their children will be destitute; and

17 WHEREAS, Voluntary efforts by the private sector to employ
18 welfare recipients are laudable and to be commended, but the
19 State must also take direct responsibility to ensure that
20 welfare recipients are hired in jobs that will allow them to
21 leave the welfare rolls altogether; and

22 WHEREAS, The State spends billions of dollars each year to
23 improve its economy and infrastructure and to deliver services
24 to the people of the State, all of which also serves to provide
25 jobs for its citizens; and

26 WHEREAS, The State can accomplish the objectives of
27 relieving welfare dependency and ensuring economic
28 self-sufficiency as well as the objectives related to carrying
29 out necessary governmental operations at the same time, and
30 with significant savings in State outlays in cash assistance

1 and supportive service dollars; and

2 WHEREAS, Poverty and welfare dependency can be alleviated
3 by targeting some of the resources of the State and making jobs
4 available to the welfare poor, specifically by bringing
5 qualified poor persons into the State workforce and into
6 workforces that are generated through State contracts, without
7 causing the displacement of existing workers; and

8 WHEREAS, Some State jobs that are newly created or that are
9 open through attrition and some jobs created under State
10 contracts, can be filled by qualified welfare recipients
11 without compromising the integrity of the hiring process,
12 contractor profits, collective bargaining agreements, timely
13 completion of projects, or the health and safety of Illinois
14 workers; and

15 WHEREAS, To the extent that these jobs are filled by
16 welfare recipients, the State accomplishes 4 important
17 governmental objectives simultaneously: (1) the alleviation of
18 welfare dependency, ensuring of economic self-sufficiency, and
19 lifting of individuals and families out of poverty, (2) the
20 stabilization of families and communities that are hardest hit
21 by persistent poverty and unemployment, (3) the accomplishment
22 of the essential work of the State which must be performed
23 through these jobs, and (4) the reduction of State outlays for
24 cash assistance and services for the poor; and

25 WHEREAS, The State's immediate, direct, and significant
26 interest in relieving welfare dependency and the employment of
27 the poor in jobs generated through the expenditure of State
28 funds are important issues that must be addressed; therefore be
29 it

30 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
31 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that

1 the Welfare to Work Task Force is created and shall consist of
2 6 members appointed as follows: 3 members of the House of
3 Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of
4 Representatives, one of whom shall be designated the
5 chairperson by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and
6 3 members of the House of Representatives appointed by the
7 Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, all of whom
8 shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for
9 their reasonable and necessary expenses from funds
10 appropriated for that purpose; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall study various issues
12 relating to the placement of qualified welfare recipients in
13 State jobs or jobs contracted out by the State; the Task Force
14 shall examine, among any other issues it chooses to
15 investigate, the following issues: (1) the feasibility of
16 requiring State agencies to provide the Department of Human
17 Services with a job announcement simultaneously with the
18 posting of its positions, except for those positions subject to
19 recall by laid-off employees, or those otherwise exempt, (2)
20 the ability of the Department of Human Services to review
21 positions, make eligibility determinations, recruit and screen
22 potential employees, and refer aid recipients to fill those
23 positions, and (3) the feasibility of requiring employers to
24 employ qualified aid recipients for not less than 5% of the
25 hours worked on a State contract; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall receive the assistance
27 of legislative staff, may, subject to appropriation, employ
28 skilled experts with the approval of the Speaker of the House
29 of Representatives, and shall report its findings to the
30 General Assembly on or before January 7, 2005.